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REMARKS

The present amendment is in response to the Office Action dated September 26, 2006. Claims 1-10 are now present in this case. Claims 1 and 10 are amended. Claims 11-15 are canceled.

Claims 1-3 and 5-10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over the combination of U.S. Patent No. 4,541,227 to Coad et al. combined with Swiss Patent No. CH 187,705 to Christoffel and German Patent Publication DE 3,416,710 to Lissner. The applicants wish to express their appreciation to the Examiner for a telephone conference with the applicants' attorney on October 23, 2006. As discussed in the telephone conference, only Christoffel shows an aperture in the top portion of the bag. However, as discussed with the Examiner, Christoffel discloses a bag in which a vertical crease extends the entire length of the bag directly through the hole and the notch rendering it unsuitable for use with an automated bale-filling apparatus, as recited in both claims 1 and 10. Claims 1 and 10 have been amended to clarify that the paper panels of the bale are flat in the area of the aperture and the cut-away portion.

Thus, Christoffel teaches directly away from the claimed invention by disclosing a lightweight bag intended to be removed by hand and which has a vertical crease extending the entire length of the bag. When the combination of references are considered in their entirety, it is believed that claims 1 and 10 are allowable over the combination of Coad et al., Christoffel, and Lissner. Claims 2-9 are also allowable in view of the fact that they depend from claim 1, and further in view of the recitation in each of those claims.

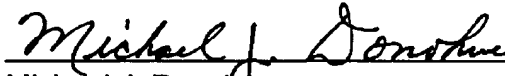
In view of the above amendments and remarks, reconsideration of the subject application and its allowance are kindly requested. The applicants have made a good faith effort to place all claims in condition for allowance. If questions remain

regarding the present application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (206) 628-7640.

Respectfully submitted,

Timothy B. Main et al.

Davis Wright Tremaine LLP



Michael J. Donohue

Registration No. 35859/

MJD:gatc

1501 Fourth Avenue
Suite 2600
Seattle, Washington 98101-1688
Phone: (206) 628-7640
Fax: (206) 903-3740

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